

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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REFUNDS AVAILABLE FOR SOME ANTIDEPRESSANT PURCHASES

BISMARCK – Attorney General Wayne Stenehjem announced today that consumers may be entitled to cash refunds if they bought the antidepressant drug “Remeron” or its generic equivalent, mirtazapine, between June 15, 2001 and January 25, 2005.

The refunds are part of a \$36 million nationwide settlement with drug maker Organon USA Inc. and its parent company Akzo Nobel N.V. for improperly monopolizing the U.S. market for the drugs. The settlement is subject to court approval before it can become final.

“The drug manufacturer abused federal law to reduce competition and prevent consumers from having access to low-cost, generic equivalents of this drug,” Stenehjem said. “This settlement provides a way for North Dakota to help lower prescription drug costs for its consumers.”

The lawsuit alleged that Organon unlawfully extended its patent by claiming a new treatment use for the drug and delayed listing its patent with the US Food and Drug Administration. These efforts delayed the availability of lower-cost generic substitutes, resulting in higher prices to consumers. Remeron, at its peak, was Organon’s top-selling drug with annual sales in excess of \$400 million.

The settlement, if ultimately approved by the court, will resolve the claims brought by state attorneys general as well as a private class action lawsuit.

Eligible consumers can file a claim on the settlement website at www.RemeronSettlement.com, or obtain a claim form from the settlement administrator by calling toll-free at 1-866-401-6807. Completed claim forms must be postmarked or filed online by June 13, 2005 in order to be eligible for a possible refund. Information on “opting-out” of the settlement also is available at the settlement website or by calling the toll-free number.

More information about the settlement is available from the Consumer Protection Division 1-800-472-2600 or (701) 328-3404.

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